



5 Characteristics of Ichabod Prophets You Need to Avoid

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Ichabod prophets hide in caves to escape the persecution and whine on the Internet when people don't accept their prophetic utterances. (Pixabay/StockSnap)

Ichabod prophets stay in attack mode, tearing down what God is building, because they have no glory revelation from which to edify, comfort and exhort the body. Beware Ichabod prophets.

I didn't expect such a strong reaction when I penned that post on Facebook earlier this month. Some didn't know what an Ichabod prophet was. Others offered a hearty "amen." Still others manifested their Ichabod-ness.

What is an Ichabod prophet? We find mention of Ichabod in 1 Samuel 4:19-21.

"His daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was pregnant, about to give birth. And when she heard the news that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she kneeled down and gave birth, for her pains came upon her. About the time of her death the women that stood by her said to her, 'Do not fear, for you have borne a son.' But she did not answer or regard it. She named the child Ichabod, saying, 'The glory is departed from Israel,' because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law and her husband."

The translation of Ichabod is somewhat debated. Some theologians say it simply means "no glory." Others say the name actually poses a question: "Where is the glory?" The question, of course, suggests the glory is nowhere to be found. Yet another translator offers the meaning, "Alas! The glory," an expression of bitter sorrow that God's glory is absent.

1. Ichabod prophets do not carry a strong revelation of the Father's heart.

Ichabod prophets are missing a deep revelation of the glory of God—the goodness of God—so they prophesy harsh words, judgements with no room for repentance, curses on people and nations and celebrate when their witchcraft comes to pass. They may even trumpet an intimacy message, but bitterness supersedes a glory revelation.

2. Ichabod prophets hide in caves when Jezebel attacks because they fear man more than they fear God.

First Kings 18:4 tells us, "When Jezebel killed the prophets of the Lord, Obadiah took a hundred prophets and hid them in groups of fifty in a cave and fed them with bread and water." Glory dwellers don't hide in caves. Ichabod prophets hide in caves to escape the persecution and whine on the Internet when people don't accept their prophetic utterances.

3. Ichabod prophets are yes-men. They flatter people in authority with prophetic words that bring them personal advancement.

First Kings 22:6-12 says, "Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, approximately four hundred men, and said to them, 'Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to battle, or shall I wait?' And they said, 'Go up, for the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king.' But Jehoshaphat said, 'Is there not a prophet of the Lord here whom we can ask?'

"And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, 'There is still one man, Micaiah the son of Imlah, by whom we can inquire of the Lord. But I hate him because he never prophesies good for me, but always evil.' And Jehoshaphat said, 'Let not the king say so.' Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, 'Quickly, bring Micaiah son of Imlah.'


"The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah each put on his robes and sat on his throne at the entrance of the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets prophesied before them. Zedekiah the son of Kenaanah made horns of iron and said, 'Thus says the Lord: With these you shall push the Arameans until you have consumed them.' All the prophets prophesied similarly, saying, 'Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the Lord will deliver it into the king's hand.'"

Micaiah offered a true word of the Lord and went to prison for it. That's the opposite of the Ichabod prophets Obadiah hid in a cave, hiding from Jezebel.

4. They prophesy what the party line wants to hear.

Ichabod prophets deal falsely and are greedy. They prophesy unto popularity. Jeremiah 6:13-14 says, "For from the least of them even to the greatest of them, everyone is given to covetousness. And from the prophet even to the priest, everyone deals falsely. They have healed also the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace."

5. Ichabod prophets prophesy without an unction.

Jeremiah 23:21 says, "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." If God is not speaking, prophets should not be talking in His name. Ichabod prophets speak anyway. 

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